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WILD-BRIAR and WATTLE-BLOSSOM

A Home on the Barrow.

WILD-BRIAR AND WATTLE-BLOSSOM

VERSES

BY REV. J. J. MALONE

"Only the breath of a hawthorn flower,
And I am back in the old boreen"

—*Anonymous.*

MELBOURNE
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Annex

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

The following verses, contributed in leisure moments to ephemeral magazines, have been, at the suggestion of some friends, collected and reprinted in booklet form. They give a voice to little more than the "deep sigh of sadness" which escapes from the heart of the Gael in the lands of his dispersion, and which translates itself inevitably into song. Their merit, if any, lies in their fidelity to that national sentiment of a world-wandering yet home-loving people. The captious critic, if at all caustic (and his name is legion), may be disposed to say of them, what a somewhat cynical Hibernian said of the effusions of a compatriot poetaster—that "they will be read when Homer and Virgil and Shakespeare are forgotten—but not before it." To the more sympathetic reader, whose love of the homeland extends even to the haws of its hedges, I trust they may not be altogether unwelcome.

J. J. MALONE.

Melbourne,
June, 1914.

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BY THE BANKS OF THE BARROW.

Bound for Australia

I.

Ah, fare ye well:—I cannot tell
  How many leagues may lie before,
How many skies must set and rise,
  Ere we meet on our island-shore!
  Friends shall we meet thus evermore?
Thou singing stream, and dost thou flow?
Ye laughing flowers, how can ye blow?
Ye wild birds, could ye warble so?
    While I go! While I go!

II.

Ah, fare ye well:—ye cannot tell
  Why falls to earth one human tear.
Tho' this sad heart nigh breaks to part,
  Ye mock me as I linger here;
  No matter, ye are ever dear.

And song and sunshine bide with ye,
Who made this woodland home to be
A home—that never more to see
Is death to me! Is death to me!

III.

Friends, fare ye well! for *ye* can tell
How hard it is to part for aye—
To bleed and bear, and know not where:
Only twelve thousand miles away!
And who shall turn the night to day?
The stranger in a foreign land
Treading alone its lonely strand—
Who talks with him and takes his hand
O'er the sand, o'er the sand?

IV.

Oh, fare ye well! I cannot tell
What breeze shall swell the spreading sail;
Or foul or fair? I do not care.
'Tis Heaven that gives the guiding gale,
And my heart lies in Innisfail.
Ah! part we must, and meet we may;
The tides shall bear me miles away—
Shall I forget, may I not say
The heart will stay, the heart will stay?

V.

Still fare ye well! 'Tis hard to tell
  The parting pang: I shall not meet
With hearts as true, with friends like you.
  In Heaven the hours may be as sweet;
  The moaning sea frets at my feet.
Farewell, weep not! I cannot weep—
The sun is set, the lark's asleep;
Ye angry winds, now may ye sweep
    Me o'er the deep, me o'er the deep.

Ierne, That Land of Ours

There was an ancient fairy isle
An Eden in the western seas,
With soft skies o'er whose sunny smile
Wooed ever its ambrosial breeze;
'Twas known, 'tis said, to lyric Greece,
A land of beauty, land of dream,
Ogygia, home of wealth and peace,
The old Homeric muse's theme;
The swallow loved its gentle air,
The wild bee drank its dewy flowers,
The loveliness of earth was there,
And, oh, that land was ours, was ours.

There was an ancient holy isle
Below the light of western skies,
Whose green lap bore the sacred pile
Where faith lit up her radiant eyes,
A star of glory far above
Flashed o'er the world and made to bloom
With all the light of Christian love;
Sad lands that lay in Pagan gloom.

The martyr's blood, the virgin's prayer,
Pure as the breath of its own bowers,
The Saint and Scholar, all were there,
And, oh, that land was ours, was ours.

There was an ancient glorious isle
Watched over by the western stars,
And o'er its fair and fertile soil
Was heard the martial tramp of Mars;
No land on earth but loved its name,
And feared to face its warriors brave;
Its sword flashed like the lightning's flame,
At home and o'er the ocean wave.
The golden sunburst floated there,
High o'er its grand old castle towers,
Where Knights of faith and freedom were.
And, oh, that land was ours, was ours.

Ierne—and shall it never be
The land of freedom's song no more;
The frown of one dark Upas tree
Is all that clouds its beauty o'er ;
Its skies are blue, its fields are green,
Its harbours deep, its woodlands gay;
One black spot only blots the scene,
And why not sweep that stain away?

Her children brave, her daughters fair,
  Her homes that virtue grandly dowers;
Oh, God, be with us if we swear
  To make that grand land ours, yes, ours!

Ierne—by all the martyrs trust,
  By all the cloisters sacred vow,
By all your heroes' hallowed dust,
  And all your woes, we'll right you now.
Great land; and what is life to me,
  And what is love, and what is joy?
If tyrants forge their chains for thee,
  And widows wail and orphans cry;
Slaves bend their knee to prospering crime;
  Shall we adore no holier powers?
Yes, and that land of ancient time
  We'll prove 'twas ours; we'll make it ours.

My River, My Own River

It was playing with the sunshine,
    It was laughing in the dell—
My river, my sweet river!
    That I go to bid farewell.
It was singing with the skylark
    When I came into the glen,
My river, my own river,
    That I'll never see again.

My river, my wild river!
    By your mossy banks and bowers
Will blow the woodland blossoms
    And will bloom thy meadow flowers,
And the sunshine out of Heaven
    Come to light your face again
Till you sing and go a-singing
    Down along the dewy glen.

My river, my glad river!
    But I'll never see you more,
And I'll never hear your music
    On that far Australian shore;

The voices and the visions,
And the glorious morning dream
Are gone and gone for ever,
With the singing of your stream.

Oh, loved and lovely river!
I could weep mine eyes for thee,
Thy waters are the throbbing
Of the heart that leaped in me;
I'll feel again its beating
In the seraph's rapturous love
By the stream of living water
In that spirit-land above.

The Student to His Sister

Now the fields are all in flower,
And the lark is flinging on you
From his wings in a radiant shower
The drops of the morning dew.
And you're watching the lark, I know,
As he soars to the rising sun,
And the flowers around you blow
And the brooks beside you run.

I would I were as thou art,
I would that I were with thee,
To share with a riotous heart
In that rapturous melody.
To read with inspirèd eyes
What our books can never tell,
What the lark sings up the skies
What the brook says down the dell.

For no flowers around me bloom
And no brooklets by me sing,
And never above my room
Doth the wild lark wave his wing.

But one sweet woodland thrush,
When the sun is bright and strong,
From the branch of a hawthorn bush,
Fills the morning time with song.

And oft in the evening hour,
From the top of yon chestnut tree,
When its leaves are white with flower,
He sings his wild songs to me.
And the evening star above
Smiles down thro' the misty sky,
And a feeling of infinite love
Fills the heart with a wondrous joy.

But I sigh for my woodland home
And the light of its laughing looks,
And I long, oh I long, to roam
By the paths of its prattling brooks,
To bend as the violet o'er,
And drink the wild dreams they bring,
And follow the lark once more
Through the purple morn of spring.

Come with Me to the Garden

I.

Come with me to the garden
  Till we gather in the flowers,
For they're glowing all with beauty
  From those sunny summer showers;
And we want the first and fairest
  Of the golden summer's day
To weave a crown for Mary—
  For Mary, Queen of May.

II.

Come with me to the garden
  And we'll make our evening prayer,
Beneath the orchard blossoms,
  While the birds are singing there;
And we'll let the wild birds warble,
  For they'll bring back with their lay
The child's heart to the mother—
  To Mary, Queen of May.

III.

Oh, come into the garden
  And be grieved not that I sigh,

For they're gone like those dead blossoms,
And I know not where they lie;
But one is with the angels
That we talked of on the way—
Gone to the Queen of Heaven,
That we crownèd Queen of May.

IV.

Oh, come into the garden
And we'll think of tranquil hours,
Of the lark and the green meadows,
And the woods and the wild flowers,
And the long moss by the river,
And the hillsides far away,
Where we stole out in the summer
To crown Mary Queen of May.

V.

Come, come into the garden
And we'll talk of Heaven's joys,
For my heart is full of sunshine,
Though the tears are in my eyes;
Ah, I know that from the morning
To the evening you will stay
'Neath that turtle wing of Mary—
Of Mary, Queen of May.

VI.

Then come into the garden,
  Till we gather in the flowers,
For they're glowing all with beauty
  From those sunny summer showers,
And we'll pluck the first and fairest
  Of the golden summer's day,
To weave a crown for Mary,
  Our Mother, Queen of May.

The Snowdrop's in the Valley

I.

The snowdrop's in the valley—
  Wilt thou come, my love, with me?
And I'll pluck its snowy blossom
  From the dewy banks for thee.

II.

It blooms beside the rivers
  That the sun is shining through;
It blooms within the meadows
  That are dashed with the dew.

III.

And its breath has stolen a sweetness
  As the poet's wizard words,
From the sobbing of the waters
  And the singing of the birds.

IV.

I love those snowy blossoms
  For the memories they bring
From th' enchanted land of childhood,
  From the sunrises of spring.

V.

Memories that are thrilling
As the touch of the white hand,
That led me through the mystery
Of that magic wonderland.

VI.

When the gates of pearl lay open
To the vision of the child,
And the Maytime flushed to blossom
As its Queen looked down and smiled.

VII.

For She walked with me in beauty,
Through the morning of my dreams,
O'er that pathway through the meadows
And that path beside the streams.

June Memories

"How beautiful that yesterday,
Which stood over us like a rainbow!"

I.

The hawthorn's in the hedges, and the blackbird whistles through it,
The rapturous skylark leaps up from the meadow to the morn,
The wild primrose is sighing by the stream that's singing to it—
'Tis the springtime in the valley 'mongst the hills where I was born.

II.

I can see the dear old cottage with its tufts of climbing roses,
And the amorous woodbine stealing like a lover round its eaves,
And my clinging memory clasps it with the love that it encloses,
And my heart melts with the dew upon its leaves.

III.

For the dreams of youth are in it, and the skies have caught their glory,
See the roseate morning watching in the clear day o'er it still,
And it rises in my vision like the Tir-na-noge[1] of story
On the green lap of the valley in the blue mist of the hill.

IV.

How wondrously the South wind stirs the June rose at its portal,
And the robin at its window, what a mystic song he sings!
Let the sceptic laugh at spirit and its hope to be immortal,
But the *soul* within us wakens at the memory of these things.

V.

From the strife of sect and party, from the race for power and pleasure,
To that old home by the river oft my aching memory flies,
Where the love of God was ever the only household treasure,
And the child walked with the angels, its meet comrades from the skies.

[1]Tir-na-noge—the fabled land of perpetual youth in the beautiful old Irish legend.

VI.

Ah! the world is sad, my brothers, and we've trod on many a thorn
Since we left that earthly Eden through its devious paths to roam,
And the fruit of years we've gathered is not that we plucked at morn
From the tree of life that blossomed by the hearth of our bright home.

VII.

But the Lord our God is gracious, and the dreary exile ended,
We shall travel back together when the springtime comes again,
To hear the lark's song ringing through the skies so soft and splendid,
And see the hawthorn flowering in each green old lane and glen.

Peace Through Death

A peace celestial lies upon my soul
As though the Dove of Heaven had spread its wings
And folded its fierce passions unto rest—
Such peace as sleeps at sunrise on the sea
When night's wild storm is over, and the wave
Steals like a lover o'er the shining sands
To whisper its sweet secrets to the shore.
O Peace divine! grey with the griefs of years,
And weary with their travail, let me sleep
Like some lone barque upon the throbbing tide
That rocks it in the haven, far from the roar
Of wind and billow on the warring main.
Secure at last upon the slumbering wave,
I lie at anchor: the loud pelting storms
And pitiless hail of fortune rend no more
The ragged sail of life; the wild unrest
Of frenzied youth and all its fevered dreams
Consume no more. I see along the strand,
Strewn by the drifting tide, the wreck of hopes
Once beautiful, and memory—a sad ghost—
Walks in the moonlight o'er the whitening beach,

Where they lie buried in the salt sea sand
As old Ulysses by the wandering foam
Of Ægean waters, dreaming of the past.
Peace to their shades;—proudly they rode at morn,
With streaming pennants glittering in the sun,
The crest of gleaming billows, strong and brave,
Then struck and sank and perished—let them be;
The furrows of the sea are in my face,
And every rugged furrow marks a grave.
But all is o'er—the glory, the despair—
My peace is made with earth and all its woe;
Man may forget the past, when God forgives.
And God is with me; I can feel His hand:
The unseen hand that held the guiding helm
Through all the storms that swept life's troubled deep.
In the sweet calm of death I *see* it now,
And move into the haven with a smile.
My sun is sinking, but I kept the faith;
And faith, sure pilot of the setting sun,
Like yon bright star of evening, leads me home
To lie upon God's bosom, and so rest.
The lotus-dream that lures in endless quest
The wandering heart o'er all the weary seas
Is God at last: I sleep within His arms
Like some tired child upon its mother's breast.
And if I start in slumber at the dreams

That haunt me with their terror, His calm eyes
Dispel the fleeting shadow with their smile,
And draw all Heaven around me. Angels' wings
Brush by me in the stillness, and the gleam
Of eyes seraphic light the gathering gloom.
The day breaks all around me as I die,
And through the mist of death I see the dawn.

Come Back to Your Home

AN IRISH MOTHER TO HER SON IN AUSTRALIA.

Come back to your home and your own green isle,
To the friends of your youth and your mother's smile;
To the dewy vales where the young lambs play,
And the clear brooks twinkle and sing all day;
To the hazel wood and the hawthorn dell,
Where the linnet, the thrush and the blackbird dwell,
And the green old lanes, where the violets grow,
That you loved in the dear days long ago.

Come back to your home from that lone bush land,
Where you've only the care of a stranger's hand;
Where there's no one to love you, and none to share
The joys and the dreams of the days that were;
Where life is a race for the wealth that hides
In the hard quartz rock of its mountain sides,
And the luckiest digger, still doomed to roam,
With all his gold cannot build a home.

Come back to your home, for the years are going,
And the lengthening shadows are round me growing;

A Scene on the Barrow.

There's a mist in my eyes, and my heart beats low;
I must see my boy before I go.
Come back to your home, won't you hear my cry,
O'er those deafening waves, my darling boy?
For the light of Heaven, asthore, machree,
And your face is all that I care to see.

Fairy Dell

In that sweet time, when wattles bloom,
We wandered thro' the forest gloom,
A happy school let loose to stray,
And spend a thoughtless holiday.
Above us rang the parrot's cry,
The winding creek went babbling by,
While all the soft September fell
Along the slopes of Fairy Dell.

Thro' gully dark, by sunlit hill,
We wandered at our own wild will
With bubbling mirth and buoyant hope,
And leaping like the antelope;
Delirious with the joy that reigns
When youth's red wine is in the veins,
And broke the peace that, like a spell,
Hung round that lovely Fairy Dell.

Ah! happy children, whilst ye play
And pluck the wild flowers by the way,
Or fling them in the brooklet's flow,
And clap your hands to see them go,

Leave me to rest; for in a dream
I'm wandering by an Irish stream,
And hear its far-off music swell
Above your songs in Fairy Dell.

Along its banks, 'mid cowslips wild,
I stroll again, a careless child;
Above me blooms the purple morn,
Beside me breathes the white hawthorn,
And poised in air, on trembling wings,
The startled skylark leaps and sings,
Such love-song as no lyrists tell
In witching tones to Fairy Dell.

But years have passed, and leagues of sea
Lie 'tween that childhood-home and me,
And time, that rolls its troubled wave,
Between oblivion and the grave,
Has swept upon its current fast,
The cowslip pleasures of the past,
And primrose joys I knew as well
As ye that wake this Fairy Dell.

Yet why repine? Earth hath no sigh
To mourn its beauty fade and die.
By flowerless crag and flowering knoll
Yon stream goes singing to its goal.

Nor weeps the wattle while it sees
Its blossoms scattered to the breeze,
That soon shall wail with lonely knell
Its golden youth in Fairy Dell.

Go, gather ye the wattle-bloom,
I hate the muse that haunts the tomb,
And like a fallen angel sighs
In vain for its lost Paradise.
Thro' all the joys that were I see
A light of immortality,
And keep a heart like Israfel,[1]
To sing with you in Fairy Dell.

The fragrance of those forest flowers
Can waft me to my native bowers,
And stir, in spite of wrong and ruth,
The pulse of everlasting youth.
Tho' all things pass, of this be sure,
Naught perishes that once was pure,
Ay, tho' we part, and say farewell
To all we loved in Fairy Dell.

Then lift your song, this day's a part
Of the eternal in your heart.
'Twill blossom in the darkening eve
When life's long shadows fall, and leave,

[1]Israfel, the angel in the Koran, whose harpstrings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.

Like that wild heath by which we haste,
A purple patch in memory's waste,
To call ye back, where'er ye dwell,
To young romance and Fairy Dell.

For though youth passes, what is death,
That can be wakened by a breath?
And tho' we part like parted streams,
This sweet Avoca of your dreams
Will be the vale where we shall meet,
And tempt for aye your pilgrim feet,
With steps as swift as the gazelle,
To tread again this Fairy Dell.

Rise, let us go, the sun is set,
The wave sighs with a vague regret
To see us leave; the wind that woos
The wattle whispers soft adieus,
And flings its perfumes as we pass.
The wild flowers greet us in the grass;
Oh, be your path in life like this,
Such evening fold you with its bliss,
And death strike like the cloister bell
That calls you home from Fairy Dell.

Victoria: The Golden Land

Golden land, upon whose golden brow
Eternal sunshine glitters; in whose heart
Youth glows and burns with all its golden dreams,
Whose radiant hills are pierced with golden veins
Where glide o'er golden sands the glistening streams
With their gold freight to the green vales below,
VICTORIA!

The old world reels amidst the shock of war,
Some vast upheaval threatens all its thrones,
And shakes the nations with a nameless dread;
But thou art peaceful as a child asleep
In thy primeval forests, and the blare
Of angry trumpets breaks not on thy rest,
VICTORIA!

Thy shining feet I see upon the hills;
O may they tread the blesséd paths of peace
In plain and mountain through this virgin land,
And may the Golden Age which poets dream
And prophets from their Pisgah heights discern
Be thine to link with that inviolate name,
VICTORIA!

The Day I Rode to Gaffney's Creek, Beside the Goulburn Water

(Gaffney's Creek, Victoria.)

Australia Felix! here's success;
Thine be a name of glory
For trampled millions yet to bless
In thy grand Southern story.
A son of Erin, loyal and true
As Munster valleys breed 'em,
I hail her proudly men with you,
The sacred home of freedom.
I always thought her young and gay,
But brave and fair I thought her,
The day I rode to Gaffney's Creek,
Beside the Goulburn water.

The sun rose o'er the towering hills,
And shot its golden quiver;
And down the gorges twinkling rills
Ran to the welcoming river;
The lyre-bird whistled through the trees,
Whose forest shades protect her,

And wattles flung unto the breeze
The god's own native nectar;
The mute lips of the muse it stirred,
And song again it brought her,
The day I rode to Gaffney's Creek,
Beside the Goulburn water.

Range upon range, I see them still
Soar and sweep all round me,
As, link by link, hill after hill
In magic chain enwound me;
Deep in the gorges through the gloom,
In all its springtime splendour,
Flashed the fresh wattle's yellow bloom
In beauty soft and tender;
And down the gully sang the stream,
The song that nature taught her,
The day I rode to Gaffney's Creek,
Beside the Goulburn water.

Australia Felix! land of hope,
When hope elsewhere is ending;
That morn on many a sunny slope,
I saw your star ascending.
Was it the prophet's Pisgah gaze,
Or but the poet's vision?

For tranced in its transfiguring rays,
I saw your fields elysian
With flocks and herds and smiling homes,
Lithe son and lovely daughter;
The day I rode to Gaffney's Creek,
Beside the Goulburn water.

Ay, come it must, or soon or late,
For man's persistent labour
Makes mightier changes in a State
Than cannon or than sabre.
E'en as I gazed, a city rose
With dome and tower and steeple,
And all the bounteous life that flows
Around a joyous people;
The children's laugh, the lover's sigh
Came with the words he sought her,
The day I rode to Gaffney's Creek,
Beside the Goulburn water.

Then here's the pioneers who sow
For this grand day that cometh;
Deep in the river flats below,
Or on the mountain summit.
Where'er those stubborn hills they break,
They dig at life's own fountains;

For cities here their sources take,
Like rivers, from the mountains;
"Let empires spring elsewhere," I cried;
"Not here, on fields of slaughter,"
The day I rode to Gaffney's Creek,
Beside the Goulburn water.

Australia Felix! here's success;
I love your youthful daring;
Planting with streets the wilderness,
And stately cities rearing,
Where wild beasts ranged the forests free,
Thro' immemorial ages;
The muse of history leaves to thee
The best of all her pages.
Oh, may she write a name to live
In man's love, I besought her,
The day I rode to Gaffney's Creek,
Beside the Goulburn water.

This Summer Six Years Ago

I'm sitting once more in the shade of the gum
That is fronting the College of Kew,
Where year after year for six summers I've come
To the task of the annual review.
And the locusts are still in the boughs overhead,
And the sky over Richmond's aglow
With the sunset that set me a-dreaming instead,
This summer six years ago.

Six years!—Well, I guess that's a rattling pace
For the frollicking hours to run.
Why, it seems but a year since I first saw the face
Of that grand Australian sun!
Glad to be running his race, he seemed
In the glory of youth not to know
The grey of the twilight at all, as I dreamed,
This summer six years ago.

Dreamed!—Why, 'twas the dream of my own young heart
Of the life that was in it then.
Will it ever come back to the east, to start
Like that sun its wild race again

Through the clear horizons of cloudless hope?—
Ah! the years have brought changes, I trow,
Since I first saw him smile down yon western slope,
This summer six years ago.

For the land was aflame with the fever of gold,
And the glittering air and the skies
Caught the glow from its heart, and the heart should be
cold
That did not feel its young pulses rise.
But the hopes were illusive; I've been through the slums
With their poverty, sin, and woe,
And can laugh at the dreams in the shade of the gums,
Of this summer six years ago.

Laugh! yes, let jackasses laugh in the scrub
Through all seasons, all hours of the day,
But I'd just as soon have the old stoic in his tub
As the man who can always be gay.
If there's naught to regret there was nothing to love,
For each joy on this earth has its woe,
And a light has gone out in the Heavens above,
Since this summer six years ago.

Oh, the youth and romance of those rapturous times!
Oh, the vigour of heart and brain,

When the cup of delight that leaks into these rhymes
  Had no lingering dregs of pain!
And the friendship sure and unfaltering trust—
  What wonder the tears will flow
As I think of them gone with my mates to the dust,
  Since this summer six years ago.

Gone!—Shall I call up the king of them all
  From his sleep so lone and long
In those damp, dark vaults where no accents fall,
  Save the tones of the funeral song?
Ah! youth's a traitor and death's a knave,
  Else I'd never be singing so
This saddest of requiems over your grave,
  Since this summer six years ago.

Six years! Well, I wonder will other folk smile
  At the follies of folk like me
In the years yet to come, as they linger awhile
  In the shade of this old gum tree,
And gaze at the city that slumbers so near,
  And the red sunset sinking so low
In the west, with the hopes that I harboured here,
  This summer six years ago.

Perhaps:—but I've learned to laugh as a jest
  At the frown of the cynic or sneer.

The dagger that lies in a man's own breast
  Is the dagger he has to fear.
And, old horse, though I've travelled the rough and the
    smooth,
  When my leg o'er your haunches I throw,
I can still feel the thrill of my guileless youth,
  As this summer six years ago.

James Clarence Mangan

O saddest singer of my land of song—
Mangan!—thy name doth haunt me like a knell,
That rings the death of hope, and love, and youth,
And all that brightens this dark world of woe.
Sadder thy song than Rachel's piercing cry
Above her children's graves; or than the moan
Of wailing Banshee by the midnight well.
The lost Archangel sweeps his scornful lyre
With scarce more mournful music than thine own.
In springtime, when the meadows were abloom,
And Love, a singing skylark, soared to Heaven,
With all the young heart's gladness on its wings,
Thy song came to me like the requiem wind
That wails amongst the yellowing autumn leaves,
And sweeps them to oblivion. Hapless muse,
That sits like some lone mourner by a grave
And weeps o'er ashes! Dry those idle tears.
Was there no hope to thrill thy sorrowing lyre?[1]

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[1] "Tell how his boyhood was one drear night-hour,
How shone for him through his griefs and gloom
No star of all Heaven sends to light our
Path to the tomb.
. . . . . .

"And tell how now, amid wreck and sorrow,
And want and sickness, and houseless nights,
He bides in calmness the silent morrow,
That no ray lights."

—*Mangan.*

Shone not for thee the light of lovelier skies,
Than those that weep o'er thy "Dark Rosaleen."

An earth-worm,[2] fitted with angelic wings,
Clay-born, clay-nurtured, and then clay-entombed,
Is this the awful burthen of thy song?
Hadst thou no vision of the loftier spheres,
Where these swift pinions bear the deathless soul
To its Divine Elysium? Who is God,
That He should mock th' immortal hope of man
To be immortal? What is Love Divine,
The thirst eternal in the aching breast,
That it should perish by an empty well,
Like some lost Arab in a wilderness?
O radiant spirit, dry those sterile tears
That Köerner[3] wept above his withered flowers
As thou 'bove withered hopes, more scalding still.
What are the griefs of Erin, or our own,
That her old harp should sing them evermore?
Sweet are its minor chords; but, ah! they stir
The Gaelic heart with their divinest tones
When David's sorrow sweeps the sobbing strings.

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[2]"Non v'accorgete voi che noi siam 'vermi
Nati a formar l'angelica farfalla?"—*Dante.*

("Do you not perceive that we are worms born to form the angelic butterfly?")

[3]"Köerner's tears were wept for withered flowers,
Mine for withered hopes; my scroll of woe
Dates, alas! from youth's deserted bowers,
Twenty golden years ago."—*Mangan.*

And thou, her master-minstrel,[4] and own child,
Whose magic touch could wake each wizard strain,
And, with immortal music, wed her tears,
Hast left no Royal Psalter to your land.
Unhappy Mangan! mourning amidst ruins
Of grey old castles and dismantled towers,
The wreck of thy own happiness and Eire's.
What life was thine? Yet hast thou grandly sung
The vanities of earthly love and fame,
And raised along the Appian Way of life
The tombs of the immortals and thine own.
Peace to your ashes. By the lonely urn,
Half-hidden 'mongst the thistles[5] o'er your grave,
A pilgrim of your genius, once I stood,
And watched awhile the pale-faced summer moon,
From cloud to cloud, sail through a starless sky,
So lone and loveless, like that life of thine.
Full twenty golden years have passed since then;
And, had we tears to weep o'er human woes,

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[4]"I have never yet met a cultivated Irish man or woman, of genuine Irish nature, who did not prize Clarence Mangan above all the poets that their island of song ever nursed.
—*John Mitchel.*

[5]"Tick, tick! Tick, tick! not a sound save Time's
And the wind gust, as it drives the rain—
Tortured torturer of reluctant rhymes,
Go to bed, and rest thine aching brain!
Sleep!—no more the dupe of hopes and schemes;
Soon thou sleepest where the thistles blow—
Curious anti-climax to thy dreams
Twenty golden years ago!"
—*Mangan.*

I well might fill the urn beside your tomb.
For home and friends and country lie afar,
And many a hope hath withered; but the star
That led the kings of old is shining yet—
The star of faith, that lights the path to peace,
And through the night I hear the angels' songs.

Lovely Loutit Bay, Lorne

Cool blows the freshening southern breeze,
As sets the soft midsummer's day,
Whilst here I sit amongst the trees,
And gaze on lovely Loutit Bay.

Twelve summers have gone by since last
I saw its waves, like lions at play,
Shake their grey manes as they raced past
To yon white beach of Loutit Bay.

Girt by the undulating hills,
At whose calm feet it flings its spray,
And with its storm their silence fills—
I love this lovely Loutit Bay.

The clash of creeds and parish cares
Fret life and its fond hopes away,
And sow our path with thorns and tares
That never grow by Loutit Bay.

Man and his world—the sin and woe
That darken his sad world away—
I leave beyond these cliffs that throw
Their glory down on Loutit Bay.

The fierce unrest, the frenzied strife,
Of little gods of human clay
Reach not the rapturous joy of life
That thrills the soul at Loutit Bay.

Here Nature tunes her forest lyre,
And sings her sea-born roundelay,
Whilst all the listening soul's afire
With her wild song in Loutit Bay.

We live by faith, and hope, and love,
So poets sing and preachers say;
Our grave is here, our goal above,
That truth I learn by Loutit Bay.

For thoughts immortal come to me,
And deathless hopes assert their sway,
As, like the Hebrew[1] king, I see
The waves leap in at Loutit Bay.

Majestic billows! how they sweep,
And splash in thunder-clouds their spray;
Whilst, pillowed on the heaving deep,
The sea-gull sleeps on Loutit Bay.

Meet image of the good and pure,
Whose wingéd spirits calmly stay

[1]Mirabiles elationes maris, Mirabilis in altis Dominus: Wonderful are the surges of the sea, wonderful is the Lord on High.—*Psalm xcii.*

Through all the storms of life secure,
  Like yon white bird on Loutit Bay.

With shivered sail and splintered mast,
  The wrecks of passion run their way,
As billows borne before the blast
  Rush to those rocks by Loutit Bay.

Youth strives, but manhood seeks for rest,
  With 'wildered brain and heart grown grey,
Give me to quiet an aching breast
  This lotus-land of Loutit Bay.

Tired sailor of the troubled sea,
  'Mongst those lone rocks I long to stray,
Forgot, forgetting all but Thee,
  Lord of this lovely Loutit Bay.

The Congress Ode

TO COMMEMORATE THE OPENING OF ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL AND THE FIRST CATHOLIC CONGRESS OF AUSTRALASIA.

What Church is this that lifts its Gothic spires,
And boldly fronts the bright Pacific seas?
What sounds are these that float from viewless lyres,
And fill with song the soft September breeze?
What eager feet are hurrying through the trees
To that high hill where England's[1] seaman stands,
And looks like Moses through the centuries?
Why stirs the mother city all her lands?
Or what wild joy is this that her young heart expands?

Lift up your gates, ye princes: Let the ark
Of God and of your fathers enter in.
A thousand years it led you through the dark,
From savagery to freedom; and within

[1]Captain Cook, whose statue stands in Hyde Park, just opposite the Cathedral, and who was the first to enter Botany Bay Heads, April 28, 1770.

Flames still the fire you quenchèd with your sin,
  Lift up your gates, and let your trumpets blare—
A house of cedar,[2] not a tent of skin,
  Enshrines it on the sunny hill-top there,
  Where Celt and Saxon meet to breathe a mutual prayer.

Wak'st thou, swart Spaniard,[3] from thy lonely sleep
  Beneath the wattle by that lovely bay?
Hear'st thou above the dirges of the deep
  The pealing bells in far St. Mary's play?
And stirs their Miriam song thy mouldering clay?
  Is this the land that met your dying gaze,
Where prowling savage and wild beast of prey
  Ranged unmolested through its desert ways,
  And only thy white sail flapped o'er its silent bays?

And where is he[4] within whose burning veins
  The blood of the first martyrs ran aflame,

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[2]II. Kings vii., 2.

[3]Père Recevéur, who accompanied M. de la Perouse, the renowned explorer, in the capacity of botanist and chaplain. Wounded at Maouna, one of the Navigator Islands, he died on reaching Australia, February 17, 1788, and lies on a gentle slope of rising ground on the north coast of Botany Bay. He is the first priest who is known to have been buried in Australia.

[4]Father Harold. Suspected of being implicated in the rebellion of 1798, he was seized at the altar in Saggart, and sent out in the "Minerva" from the Cove of Cork, August 24, 1799. He arrived at Port Jackson, January 11, 1800. Though he came as a convict, he stayed as an apostle, and was the first priest to minister to the hapless exiles of Erin in Australia. He died in Dublin in 1830, at the age of 85, and lies in the Richmond Cemetery.

The convict priest who came like Paul in chains,
To plant the faith and leave a deathless name—
The glory of this country and its shame?
Heroic Harold, by the Liffey's wave
Breaks on thy slumber now our glad acclaim,
And leaps thy broken heart within its grave
For him you left behind—a savage and a slave?

A brighter day has dawned on us and thee,
No more our prophets hide[5] in mountain caves.
The power to think, the passion to be free,
No freeman now in all this realm enslaves,
Nor flies the felon o'er the sullen waves.
The sleuth-hound tracks the Soggarth now no more
To quench in blood the ancient faith he saves,
As Israel saved the sacred fire[6] of yore,
That all her scattered tribes might witness and adore.

God of our fathers, on the Cross they tell
Thy face turned westward to our Irish skies;
And all her story shadows but too well
The shame and anguish of those aching eyes—
The cloud that hung on Calvary o'er her lies.
Left by the world she died to save, forlorn—
Hath she not trod the path of sacrifice
And drained like Thee the bitter cup of scorn,
And worn on her fair brow the bleeding crown of thorn?

[5]Like Elias in the cave on Mt. Horeb.—III. Kings xix., 9.
[6]II. Machabees i., 19.

But now she rises with her glorious scars,
And lifts above the land that was her tomb
This gorgeous temple to those southern stars.
The rose of dawn breaks on her night of gloom,
Empurpling all her hills; and from her womb
Go forth her sons as Aidan[7] went of old,
The quenchèd fires on your altars to relume,
And lead the Saxon back into the fold
That kept your daughters pure and made your sons so bold.

O Mother Church of this young motherland,
Lift up thine eyes and look around and see,
As in the prophet's[8] vision 'fore thee stand
Thy children—from all shores they come to thee,
To grace to-day thy glad Epiphany.
Look up, and let the sunrise light your brow!
Unfettered in this fair land of the free,
What Church has such a destiny as thou?
And who shall sing the song thy stars are singing now?

The old world like some weary Titan swoons,
The torch of war makes ashes of its thrones,

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[7]One of the early Irish saints, who went over to teach the Saxon youth in Melrose and Lindisfairne.

[8]Epistle of the Feast of the Epiphany, Isaias lx., 1-6.

Its muse like Marius mourns amidst its ruins;
Nor wakes a prophet with his thunder-tones
To stir to life its valley of dry bones.
The old world wanes with all its old renown—
Its morning splendours light up other zones,
And west and south, e'en as its sun goes down,
New worlds rise from the wave and wear its radiant crown.

Australia! sunny Eden of the South,
The Tir-na-noge[9] of all our old-world dreams,
The wine of life turns nectar in thy mouth,
And age grows young by thine elysian streams.
Thou Hebe of the nations, all our themes
Are lighted by the hope thy young heart fills,
As thy clear sky with morning's golden beams;
The desert blooms, the throbbing forest thrills,
And joy leaps like the roe on thine exultant hills.

Rejoicing, like a giant, to run your race,
Whose hand shall guide your coursers of the sun,
Check their mad course and curb their fiery pace,
And rein them through the centuries as they run?
Rome fell amidst its idols, Goth and Hun
Pulled its proud temples down and razed its throne;
Of all its guardian deities there was none
To stay its doom. Then Leo went alone,
And with his cross rebuilt a new world of his own.

[9]The land of perpetual youth.

That power is with us still—a god of men—
The sage[10] of ancient Greece in vision knew;
It comes to preach the same old faith again
That Celt and Saxon from their forests drew,
Cut down their groves, their idols overthrew,
And made their tribes a nation. Shall ye spurn
The power that gave you faith and empire too?
Ah! in their graves the ancient saints would turn,
And Cuthbert, Bede, Augustine shame ye from their urn.

Hail, Mother Church! we children of the Gael
Have clung to you through all the changing years.
The gates of hell we knew could not prevail
Against your strength and wisdom—through our tears
We see your steeple pierce these sunny spheres,
And lift the Cross above their loftiest towers;
Your song of Miriam warbles in our ears,
For faith, that conquered earth and all its powers,
This glorious temple rears, and that grand faith is ours.

Beloved Saint of our beloved Eire!
Amidst the songs of angels hear'st our song?
If there's a joy on earth that can inspire
A soul in Heaven, and to its bliss belong,
If gods rejoice at good men braving wrong,
Apostle of the Gael, what glory's thine!

[10]Plato, who held that man needs a god to be his teacher.

Scattered by all the winds the world along
We have been true to our ancestral line,
And to the faith you brought from saintly Celestine.

That deathless faith the deathless Church has borne
To those bright lands beyond the Southern foam;
A captive like thyself, she too hath worn
The galling chain, and pined for her far home.
But now she comes with all the might of Rome
To bless her land of exile, and build here
An Isle of Saints beneath its sunnier dome,
Whose children[11] shall go forth afar and near,
And draw the East at last within its sacred sphere.

A hundred summers scarce upon her smile
Since first a trembling babe and doomed to die,
E'en as the Hebrew prophet by the Nile
She slept beside these waters—years go by—
And now from Pisgah's peak her kindling eye
Surveys a land of promise—who shall sing
The glories of the day that draweth nigh,
When sailless sea and songless forest ring
With all the crowded life the coming years shall bring.

The night of ages passeth, and the morn
The prophets saw and poets have ever sung

[11]The evangelisation of the Far East, which was the dying dream of St. Francis Xavier, seems to be the vocation of the Catholic Church in Australia.

Breaks o'er her now upon a world new-born.
The veil, that on her history darkly hung,
And hid her face, is lifted, and the young
Unclouded dawn lights her immortal brow;
Eternal truth glows still upon her tongue,
And in her heart the love that can endow
Your land with that wise peace the world is seeking now.

Ave Maria, Ave Marie

Faintly the Vesper bell floats with the breeze,
From the tall Convent tower 'mongst the pine trees.
Far through the tranquil eve, from crest to crest,
Fall its soft cadences, whispering rest
Over the silent town, over the wold,
That sleeps 'neath its curtain of crimson and gold.
And my heart wakes like the lark on the lea,
Rapturous and songful, and soaring to thee,
Ave Maria, Ave Marie.

Iram[1] hath perished, its roses are dead,
Delight, the enchantress that haunted it, fled;
Gone is the magic that gave long ago
To the roses their breath, to the morning its glow.
Youth and its sorceries vanished away,
As the purple clouds pass from the dawn of the day:
But Love, the bright Seraph that sang unto me,
In that Angelus lifts up my Spirit to thee,
Ave Maria, Ave Marie.

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[1] "Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose." —*Omar Khayyam.*
(Iram, the lovely Persian valley, planted by King Shaddad centuries ago, and now buried somewhere in the sands of Arabia.)

O Mother inviolate! Maid undefiled!
Where is there hope save in thee and thy Child?
The prophets may preach, and the poets may sing,
And the grey earth renew its green youth in the spring.
But if beauty so withers, if love so betrays,
If Fame, jealous elf, weave the yew with its bays,
If our youth wake no more with the leaves on the tree,
To whom shall we turn in this world but to thee?—
Ave Maria, Ave Marie.

Ah! sweet is the zephyr through Iram that blows,
Sweet the song that the nightingale sings to the rose;
But Iram must perish, the nightingale dies,
As the vulture of time 'midst the solitude flies.
Through the tares and the thorns the wayfarer strays,
And, like Eve back to Eden, with desolate gaze
Do we turn in our age from the desert that we
Dare not venture to tread without thy Son and thee,
Ave Maria, Ave Marie.

Loved and lovely Madonna of angels and men,
In the glance of thine eyes we grow children again.
The splendour that vanished, the love that was lost,
The hope that expired like a flower in the frost;
The joy that transfigured, the beauty, the truth,
That fling their romance round the dreams of our youth,

Thy smile reawakes, and restores unto me
The world of enchantment I walked in with thee,
Ave Maria, Ave Marie.

Ring out, silver bells, over valley and hill,
In the purple dawn once, in the golden eve still;
Let the syrens of earth and their melodies cease,
Thy song is the angel's, and singeth of peace.
Refuge of sinners, if penitent tears
Can bear to some haven the wreck of our years,
Adrift on the billows of life's troubled sea,
Starless and chartless, I call upon thee,
Ave Maria, Ave Marie.

Ave Maria! Far over the wold
Creeps the soft sunset in crimson and gold;
The thrush in the tree hears the apple-bloom fall,
And hushes his song at that Angelus call.
Peace breathes where it passes, O Gabriel[2] bell!
Leave Apollo his lute, leave the Syren her shell;
Thy music be mine through the years yet to be,
And the heart that is left me shall beat but for thee,
Ave Maria, Ave Marie.

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[2]The Angelus bell, which hangs mute to-day in many a ruined abbey tower, was known as the Gabriel bell to Catholic England before the days of the Reformation.

Lorne

Fair is Australia's sunny land,
  But nowhere breaks its purple morn
In sunnier smile, on lovelier strand,
  Than that which stretches around Lorne.

To twine Australia's name in song,
  Should poet ever yet be born,
His cradle must be cast among
  The creeks and cliffs of lovely Lorne.

Apollo by those creeks might stray
  With his wild lyre or "wreathéd horn,"
And Venus spring from the sea-spray
  That silvers all the coast of Lorne.

The joys of earth are false as fair,
  And all its roses hide the thorn—
That earth, I fling its earthenware
  As fling the tides the kelp at Lorne.

For peace is found in quest of truth,
  And not of "wine and oil and corn,"
And all these lost ideals of youth
  Return amidst the quiet of Lorne.

The glowing faith, the glorious hopes,
That youth enrich, here age adorn,
As sunset glorifies the slopes
Of those calm hills that clasp in Lorne.

How blest it were from life's rude blast,
No chart to guide, no beacon warn,
To drift ashore, and drop at last
The anchor of the soul at Lorne.

Our wants are many; give me this,
And Rothschild's millions will I scorn—
A friend to share in mutual bliss
A home beside the sea at Lorne.

A Sick Call

I.

The pale moon sails along a starless sky
Through flying clouds, whose phantom shadows pass
Like spectres by me o'er the withered grass
Where the dead gum trees gaunt and ghastly lie.
The ghost of the dead forest seems to sigh
In every wind of mountain and morass
That wails around this melancholy Bass.
There is no stir of life, nor bush-bird's cry,
Save the lone call of mopokes from the trees
That makes the forest lonelier—through the gloom,
A lonely priest, the long dark night I ride;
A sheep is stricken and the shepherd flees
To save it from its last and awful doom,
And take the God of Mercy to its side.

II.

Long years ago, by that sweet Dublin Bay
In old Clontarf, I gazed across the sea
To where the ships sailed westward, far and free.
And as I watched them many a summer's day

Drive towards the sunset thro' the glittering spray,
The dream that lured my fathers came to me.
I would arise and gird myself, and be
A warrior of the Lord, e'en such as they,
The grand old Saints of Luxeuil and Ardennes,
Whose footprints in those forests linger still,
Graven by time upon the rock of truth—
Was I not of their blood that it should thrill?—
It was the morn of life, and love stood then
With its full pitcher by the fount of youth.

III.

Was it a dream? Are we not of the race
That sailed of old in coracles the seas
Unpiloted but by the wandering breeze,[1]
Sure only of God's truth, and of the grace
That He gives His Apostle:—Though we face
By land or sea no perils such as these
That fill their lives with marvellous memories
Have we not yet their Calvary to pace?
Toiling as they up Alp and Appenine
Through forests fiercer than in fair Bretagne,

[1]This refers to the old legend of the ships that carried the Irish Missionaries, travelling without oar or rudder or human hand to steer them up the most rapid rivers and over the pathless ocean.

Where the soft lyre of Citers often sings[2]
The dear delusive song that's half divine.
Ay, the same stock from which those heroes sprang
Are we, and in our breast their spirit springs.

IV.

The pale moon sails in silence through the night,
And I go with her, this wild track alone
In awful gloom, and stillness, that the moan
Of the night wind but deepens; and the sight
Of no sweet face shall greet me, and the light
Shine nowhere for me from my own hearthstone—
The priest owns nothing he can call his own:—
Home, country, friends, love too, and all the bright
Transfiguring hopes that light this vale of woe

[2]"La lyre de Citers" is one of the loveliest legends of Brittany. It is heard in the forest after the dawn. Its music is sweeter than that of the nightingale, and they who refuse to close their ears to its seductive strains are lured by it into the depths of the forest. Under its magic the forest becomes a veritable fairyland. The branches of the trees turn to gold and silver, exquisite flowers breathe everywhere delicious perfumes, the rarest jewels glitter in the grass, waves of celestial music float and fill the air with their harmonies, and through the enchanted landscape glide forms fairer than houris in the Mahommedan Paradise. If you wish to embrace the dryads or seize the lyre, the beauty of the vision vanishes, the sound of mocking laughter is heard, and the traveller finds himself in a dreary marsh, entangled amongst thorns. Such is the legend of the lyre of Citers in the forest near Lure, a beautiful allegory, surely, of the delusive dream of pleasure in the golden morning of youth.

He leaves behind him with his boyhood's dreams
And walks the world as in a wilderness
A voice crying in the desert, such he seems:—
O call him father, brother, friend, and show
This homeless Baptist harbour in distress!

St. Patrick's Cathedral

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. And this is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith."—I. John v., 4.

So spake St. John, two thousand years ago,
The grand historic test of Christian truth,
Its Triumph over all the powers of Hell
That all the Ages witness:—so he spake
Ere yet the molten gods of pagan Rome
Were trampled with its Empire into dust;
Or sat the Vicar of the King of Kings
On its Imperial Throne; and o'er the ruins
Of Cæsar's Palace on the Palatine
The "wondrous Dome" of Peter raised the Cross,
The sceptre, and the symbol of a faith
That conquering earth has proved itself divine.
Stupendous fact that fills each wondering age,
The miracle and prophecy of time.
Victorious faith!—in that Cathedral fane
Which crowns this young Queen City of the South
With superb Gothic loveliness, and towers
O'er all its temple-spires and palace-domes,
May we not hail Thee now? Thy very name
Rings like the Clarion of triumphant faith,
And stirs the blood within our burning veins.

St. Patrick! Time and tyrants have essayed
To blot your memory from the minds of men,
And root the faith you planted from the soil
That your own tears had watered. They have failed.
Twelve thousand miles from that dear Emerald Isle
Behold this Temple to your faith and name,
Like Miriam's Song of Triumph, cut in stone.
Pillared on earth, and pointing to the stars,
The peer of old-world temples, there it stands
Upon the summit of that Eastern Hill,
And gazes out across the Southern Seas,
A work of centuries crowded into years.
The shrine and symbol of a deathless race,
That God has carried, as on eagle's wings,
Across the Red Sea of their father's blood,
And through the desert whitened with their bones.
Tower and Arch and Buttress, there it stands,
Beneath the Southern Cross; and at its feet
The tidal pulse of a great city beats,
With all the restless spirit of the race
Whose boundless Empire stretches wider far
Than that o'er which the Roman Eagles flew.
Through its wide streets all tribes and peoples pass,
And speak all tongues of Heaven; whilst the waves
That riot in sunshine round its tranquil shores
Are freighted with the wares of all the world.
O, Land of Promise to the wandering tribes
That go up still from Egypt, in the search

For peace and plenty; through th' unnumbered years
Unnumbered millions at your breast shall drain
The plenteous stream of a more potent life
Than yet has reached the yearning heart of man,
Clasped in the arms of that inviolate sea
Whose waves are yet unstained with human gore,
I see your children start their peaceful march
Through its wide fields and forests; lifting high
Above its loftiest gums the loftier spires
Of Church and Palace; planting its wild wastes
With populous cities and with prosperous homes.
And who shall be their leader? or what power
Shall knit them in one nation with one soul,
And speak to that one soul the sovereign truth,
Whose royal law makes men and nations free?
Apostle of the Gaels: our legends tell
How, as you wept o'er Erin's nameless woe,
And saw her through the cruel centuries tread
Her awful Calvary to what seemed a grave,
That o'er your eyes a light of glory fell,
And like her risen Lord again she stood
With face transfigured in the radiant morn.
Prophetic vision of triumphant faith,
Which conquered death and crushed the gates of Hell,
That closed around it; we have lived to see
The glory her Apostle only dreamed.
For has not Erin risen from the tomb,
And sent her children forth with tongues of fire

To preach the faith their fathers died to save?
Walking the earth with that Imperial Race
Whose flag is floating now o'er every sea,
Whose English tongue's the speech of half the world.
I see them carry that unconquered faith
As Israel of old the Ark of God,
Through all their wanderings in the Wilderness.
Their feet are found in those far Northern Isles,
Trod by her saints of old; the streets and lanes
Of Scotch and English cities; the palm groves
And coral strands of India; Afric sands;
The slopes of the wild prairies of the West;
The Southern pampas; the untravelled wastes
Of this great lone and immemorial land,
And that weird world of wonder and romance
Wherein the Maori builds his mountain home—
Have sounded to their footsteps and their faith.
Ye prelates of that faith within whose veins
The blood of saints and martyrs courses still,
Heirs of the men who made the Isle of Saints,
The Paul of the Apostles! ye are come
To lift with us the glorious song of Zion
That Israel feared to sing by alien streams—
The song of faith resurgent, sung in stone,
For ever here by soaring arch and spire.
We hail you with that old historic love
Which time has not extinguished, nor its scorn,
Which, like the faith that feeds its vital flame,

Must glow within our hearts for evermore.
For to that faith of Patrick ye were true,
When Truth was treason, and a felon's death
The doom of the Apostle:—the dead past
Wakes up at your presence into life,
And from their graves the martyred prelates rise
And shed a glory round you. Ye are still,
Though time may change its weapons, doomed to be
The heirs of all their glory and their woe.
Each age still stones its prophets, and truth still
Wears on its victor-brow the crown of thorns.
'Twas ever thus; and in this sunny land
Above whose hills breaks now the golden dawn
Of that new day to which the poet turns
His wistful gaze through all the weary years—
Here where the hopes, the yearnings, and the dreams
Of harsher ages find at last the soil
Whereon to blossom, even in this free land,
Within whose virgin forests flowers the past
In the full noon of freedom, there is yet
That larger freedom of the Sons of God
For which ye have to battle; and the hand
That takes the Crosier still must take the Cross.

Those Berwick Hills

I.

Twelve thousand leagues of treacherous foam
Lie 'tween me and my native home,
And six eventful years have wrought
Such havoc with my boyish thought,
So coloured all its crimsoned views
Of men and things with alien hues,
That oft it seems those Southern skies
Have burned themselves into my eyes.
Yet still a home-breath steals and thrills
My heart amongst those Berwick Hills.

II.

So gently sloping, freshly-green,
With wood and vale and creek between,
And far above a sky as bright
As ever blessed a land with light,
They seem to wear the wistful smile
That wins me to my own Green Isle,
And with its tranquil beauty fills
My thoughts amongst those Berwick Hills.

III.

Wild muse that by my woodland stream,
With youth the harp and love the theme,
Struck out a music that belongs
To Cherub lyres and Seraph songs.
I feel again your fluttering wing
Beat in my breast and bid it sing
A song such as the skylark trills,
Some lyric to those Berwick Hills.

IV.

On sunny slope, in sunless glade,
I see its peaceful homesteads laid
Where giant eucalypti grew,
That shut the sun and stars from view.
Far off the forest, gaunt and grim,
I see, and lift my heart to him,
The patient pioneer, who tills
The green slopes of those Berwick Hills.

V.

To me, the cot he calls his own
Is statelier than a monarch's throne;
And prouder than an Empire's spoil,
The patch he clears with honest toil.

The Lord of Earth to whom I bow
Is he who tames it with his plough,
And Labour's royal law fulfils,
Like you, men of those Berwick Hills.

VI.

Long may they reign, that stalwart race
Whose lion-heart is in their face,
Who yoke unto their own will
The rude primeval forest still,
And make, by might of brain and brawn,
The savage waste a smiling lawn.
Long may they reign, thus far away
From those sad lands where despots sway,
And war the blood of brethren spills,
In peace, amongst those Berwick Hills.

The Valley by the Stream

There's a vale by a winding river,
  In the Green Isle far away,
Where the cuckoo calls all summer,
  And the swallow loves to stay;
And a restless spirit ever,
  Like the god[1] on his golden beam,
With the yearning sunset travels,
  To that valley by the stream.

There the wild birds sing their gladness,
  And the stream its quiet bliss,
There the wild flowers yield their sweetness,
  To the coaxing zephyr's kiss;
There the blue sky beams—a lover
  With the light of languorous eyes,
And the green earth leaps impassionate
  To its amour with the skies.

'Tis the land of elf and fairy,
  Where the child—a fairy too—
Once walked thro' a world of wonder,
  Through the wizard world it knew,

[1]Oriel.

In the light of its fancy, weaving
The visions our fables tell,
Ere Time tore *the Veil of Enchantment*,
Or Thought *broke* the magic spell.

In that mystical valley of childhood,
The muse was the minstrel Breeze,
And it sang to the River Naiad
And the Dryad amongst the trees;
For the valley itself was haunted,
With the Loves of which Hellas sung,
When mortal wooed the immortal,
And man and the world were young.

There, as gods of the Grecian story,
We played with the Golden Hours.
The sunshine our food of Ambrosia,
Our nectar—the breath of the flowers.
Attuned to the life of Nature,
To the love at the heart of things
Aglow with the gladness of living,
With the rapture the skylark sings.

In the sweat of their brows men gather
Their gold as the reaper his grain;
Of their anguish is wisdom born,
As the child is born of pain.

For the glittering bauble of glory,
The peace of their souls they fret,
As the soldier his life imperils,
For the star on his epaulette.

They pine after beauty that withers,
After pleasures that perish they sigh,
And slake the deep thirst of the spirit
At fountains that ever run dry.
Whilst the world shrivels into a desert,
Scorched by passion's implacable breath,
And they walk it in age and illusion,
With the ghosts of a dead past to death.

But the Paradise God hath planted
Flowers on by that loitering stream,
In the light of the splendour celestial
That hallowed the child's young dream;
And the lark with its ecstasy shivers,
And the breezes its fragrance spill,
And the stars of the morning are singing
In the blue skies above it still.

Ah, You Tell Me the Bloom's on the Heather

(AN EXILE RETURNING TO IRELAND.)

Ah, you tell me the bloom's on the heather,
That the cowslip is out in the glen,
And you say that we'll pluck them together
When the April's in Ireland again;
That we'll wander by rath and by river,
Through the fields that we loved so well,
Like the angels above in their Heaven,
Through the meadows of asphodel.

"God is good"[1]—'twas the phrase of our fathers,
How it springs to my lips at this hour,
As from the blue depths of the ocean[2]
Springs up to the billow the flower;

[1] Is maith Dia—"God is good."

[2] It is an historical fact attested by travellers that in mid-ocean the loveliest flowers rise from the ocean-bed by some mysterious influence, and float in endless variety upon its bosom.

And the joy of your heart is singing
With the joy that my own heart thrills
As the nightingale sang with St. Francis[3]
'Midst the peace of his Umbrian hills.

Yes, sister, the longing is ended,
The dream of the years is nigh;
We shall meet 'midst the purpling heather,
In the light of our Irish sky;
We shall travel the valleys of childhood,
Where the Loves and the Graces are still,
And watch the June sun in its glory
Go down o'er the Wicklow hill.

In the garden the lilac is blooming,
In its hedges the green linnets sing;
Do they wake the wild magic, mavourneen,
When we thrilled to the pulses of spring?
At the rath in the moon-haunted hollow
Is the fairy-king sovereign yet?
Do you hear in the wind 'mongst the hazels[4]
The sigh of the fairies' regret?

[3]Alludes to the beautiful legend of St. Francis singing alternately with a nightingale through a summer night the love of God in the forests of Umbria.

[4]Refers to the old Irish superstition so charmingly expressed by the poet-priest of America, Rev. J. B. Dollard, in one of his inimitable Gaelic poems—"And where the silver hazels stir they say the fairies sigh."

Is the moat white with midsummer daisies,
Where we sat through the soft twilight hours,
With the heart of the old river throbbing
In mystical cadence with ours,
And talked of the singers of Erin—
'Twas the passion of you and of me—
Till the moon flung its mist of enchantment
Across the dark firs of Ardreigh?

Is the school at the cross-road standing
By the beeches of Shanganamore,
And the chapel where we and the seraphs
Knelt together to love and adore?
How I long to hear down the green laneway
Its bell call again to the Mass,
And kneel with a heart like a fountain
By a grave in the chapel-yard grass!

And Erin, for we, the Gael, love her,
She is ever in all lands our own;
We shall visit the tombs of her martyrs,
We shall kneel by the grave of Wolfe Tone,[5]
And talk in the blast of the midnight
With the spectres that haunt Mullaghmast,[6]

[5]Wolfe Tone is buried in Bodenstown Churchyard, Kildare.
[6]Mullaghmast, another historic spot in old Kildare.

"O'er the rath of Mullaghmast,
In the solemn midnight blast,
What bleeding spectres passed
With their gashed breasts bare!"

(See R. D. Williams.)

And beg of the Lord a forgiveness
For the thraldom and pain of the past.

For the last link that bound her is breaking,
And she flings, like the captive of Sion,[7]
From her proud neck the bonds of the ages,
And wakes from her sleep like a lion.
In the earth stirs the dust of her heroes,
And her saints, through their gold-gates ajar,
Look away 'midst the glory of Heaven
For the light of the Western Star.[8]

Oh, the hope shakes the heart in my bosom;
Shall I see thee, my "Dark Rosaleen,"[9]
With the sunburst of Scotia above thee,
Throned at Tara again as a queen?
Shall I mingle my voice with the minstrels,
Who loved thee thro' sorrow and wrong,
And blend in the hour of thy glory
But a note with their Miriam song?

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[7] "Shake thyself from the dust, sit up, O Jerusalem; loose the bonds from off thy neck, O captive daughter of Sion."—*Isaias lii., 2.*

[8] "The star of the West shall yet rise in its glory,
And the land that was darkest be brightest in story."
—*Callanan.*

[9] "Dark Rosaleen"—the poetical name for Ireland.

There's a fire in my breast like a fever,
  There's a mist like the dew in my eyes,
For the wattle's abloom all around me,
  And I dream 'neath the Austral skies.
But when soft, sunny April returns
  To bless the dear homeland again,
We shall travel the hillsides together,
  And dream as of old in the glen.

Oh, I Long to Go Back to Old Ireland

Oh, I long to go back to old Ireland,
And see its green valleys again,
For the breezes are calling me ever
Back to meadow and upland and glen;
And I hear 'midst the moan of the forest,
Far above the great South Ocean's swell,
The lark from its throne in the heavens,
And the thrush from its tree in the dell.

Oh, I long to go back to old Ireland,
By the Barrow one bright hour to stray,
For the cuckoo is calling me—calling
To her bowers in the blossoming May;
And the hawthorn wooes with its sweetness,
And the wild rose with its witching smile,
And the seas of the South shall not sever
My heart from that beautiful Isle.

Oh, I long to go back to old Ireland,
To that lane where the green linnets sing,

As the swallow goes back with the summer,
As the cuckoo returns with the spring;
For the voices of kindred are calling,
As the angels called back Columkille
From his exile in far-off Iona,
To my home 'neath the Wicklow hill.

Oh, I long to go back to old Ireland,
See the dear Alma Mater once more,
Live the past 'neath its golden laburnums,
Love the friends that I loved there of yore;
For the acolyte's swinging his censer
At the shrine where the priest took his vow,
And its breath is uplifting to Heaven
My heart with its fragrance now.

Oh, I long to go back to old Ireland,
To muse by the grey abbey towers,
Where the songs that the dead monks had chanted
Still haunted my childhood hours;
To hear by the grim old castle
The war-cry of the Crom-a-boo,[1]
And love the fair land of my fathers
With the love that my boyhood knew.

Oh, I long to go back to old Ireland,
To the plains of my own Kildare,

[1]The war-cry of the Fitzgeralds of Kildare.

For the friends of my youth it harbours,
And the dreams of my youth are there.
And though life hath its own wild beauty
In those lands by the Southern foam,
Still the voice of the Motherland ever
Is calling the exile home.

The Emigrant's Return

I am walking by the Barrow, 'neath the beeches of Ardreigh,
And the rooks are cawing above me, as they fly from tree to tree.
The chapel bell is calling through the still ethereal air,
And many a glad heart answers in this blesséd land of prayer.
Westward the sunset lingers, and with wondrous beauty fills
All the green far-spreading canvas of the lovely Arles hills.
Across the fields the plover is winging to its nest,
And the tranquil stream is slumbering, like some happy babe at rest.

Heart-sick of years of longing by the South Pacific foam,
I see around me smiling, the long-promised land of home.
The valleys where the skylark's song first struck the trembling lyre—
The woodlands where the zephyrs stole the muse's mystic fire—

The rath by fairies haunted, and the moat by ghosts forlorn:
The graveyard where the sainted dead lie 'neath the green hawthorn:
Their spirits walked beside me o'er the mossbanks there below,
But the only ghosts that haunt them now are the dreams of long ago.

The buttercups are gilding the green valleys with their gold,
And glittering daisies star them with the loveliness of old.
In the lanes the wildbriar blossoms, by the brooks the shy primrose,
And the violet flings its sweetness to each vagrant breeze that blows.
Through the Maybloom thrushes warble, in the hedgerow robins sing.
All the tender songs that touched me, when my life was at the spring,
And afar the Wicklow mountains, in their misty purple rise,
Where the gates of Heaven lay open to the child's angelic eyes.

Ah, I wonder if the angels keep their watch above me still,
As when gathering in the Maytime cowslips from the fragrant hill.
Gathering the young blooms of summer to enrich the humble shrine,
Where the sweet and sad Madonna looked with loving eyes in mine.
And the Queen that queenless Erin and her children so adore,
Loves she still the homeless exile with the mother-love of yore,
For the Gael is still her lover, though he travel sea and land,
And the muire dheelish[1] wins him with the touch of her white hand.

Friends are gone, and brothers parted, hopes have withered, dreams have fled,
And I walk beneath those beeches with the spirits of the dead.
Youth and Childhood, Love and Beauty, spectral figures by me pass—
Shadows are we chasing shadows, like the winds along the grass.

[1]Muire dheelish—the old Irish name for the Blessed Virgin.

Faith alone shines on resplendent, brightening as the years go by,
Though the glory that transfigured long has left the morning sky,
And it lights the dusky evening as it lit the radiant dawn
When I searched the bog-land heather for the snowy canavawn.

By the stream I stand and listen to the old familiar tone
That has thrilled me 'bove all rivers with a music of its own.
Though we glean 'mongst alien peoples, still we turn our eyes with Ruth
To the wonderland of childhood, to the wizard-land of youth,
And we yearn beside all waters towards this matchless mother-isle,
For the grace of God's its glory, and His light of love its smile.
We may take the wings of morning, but beneath yon azure dome,
Spreads no land as fair as Erin, soars no palace sweet as home.

The Little Wayside Chapel in a Green Old Irish Lane

In the shade of beech and cypress, at the crossway there it lies,
'Neath the wondrous lights and shadows of those mystic Irish skies,
Through the haunted air around it viewless spirits seem to glide,
And the sainted dead are sleeping in the graveyard by its side.
No mullioned windows light it, and it boasts no Gothic spires,
For the homely art that built it was the art of rustic sires;
But the world with all its temples holds for me no holier fane
Than the little wayside chapel in that green old Irish lane.

In the days when faith was vision, and the ministering angels smiled
From the heavens that hung so near it on the pure heart of the child,

When the world was all transfigured by the glory in its eyes,
And it walked with God in gladness 'midst an earthly paradise,
Through those fragrant fields we lingered on the way to morning Mass,
Whilst the lark sang o'er the meadow and the dew shone on the grass,
And the gates of Heaven opened to the organ's swelling strain
In the little wayside chapel by that green old Irish lane.

All the hills are drenched with sunshine, all the valleys drunk with dew,
Green linnets wake the hedges and grey larks the central blue,
Soft zephyrs steal the perfumes of a thousand flowers that blow,
And the land owns all the magic of the wistful long ago;
For, though many a hope hath withered, and though many a dream is gone,
It was always God we trusted, it was faith that led us on;
And its light shines all around me as I tread the path again
To the little wayside chapel in that green old Irish lane.

I can hear the deep bell calling in the tranquil Sabbath morn,
And through pastures green with clover and by fields of whitening corn,

O'er many a stile, light-thoughted, leap the happy girls and boys,
With the laughter clear and ringing of the heart's spontaneous joys,
And, oh! kindly voices whisper by the wayside many a prayer
That they only know in Erin, for the love of God is there,
And the wanderer's heart is breaking that he ever crossed the main
From the little wayside chapel in that green old Irish lane.

The Southern skies are splendid, and the Southern land is fair,
There's a balsam in its forests, there's a witchery in its air;
It is young, and youth is lovely; it has hope, and hope is grand,
Like a hart upon the mountains is that sunny Southern land.
But how many a Gael would barter, as he walks the crowded street,
All the gold of Australasia for the daisy at my feet,
For the home-love of those valleys, and the faith so sure and plain
Of the little wayside chapel in that green old Irish lane.

Not in bread doth man live only, wealth or fame feed not the soul,

And the wine of pleasure sickens ere we drain the poisoned bowl;
Song is but a fairy's music that our saner manhood scorns,
And the flower of wisdom wounds as, whilst we pluck it, with its thorns.
In the dreams of youth I fancied far beyond the Southern foam
Lay the enchanted land Ui Brazil, where romance should find its home,
But I turn for rest and healing, with a weary heart and brain,
To the little wayside chapel in that green old Irish lane.

Brothers, whose adventurous spirits tempt so many a treacherous wave,
Dragging grey hairs down in sorrow to so many a lonely grave,
Seek ye fortune, ye may find it wedded with a fierce unrest,
In the forests of the South Land, in the prairies of the West.
Seek ye peace, then stay in Erin, for it breathes in every gale,
Blowing through the flowerful valleys of your own sweet Innisfail,
And the sainted dead have found it where the turf is fresh with rain,
By the little wayside chapel in that green old Irish lane.

The Old Whitewashed Schoolhouse of Shanganamore

Through the bogs of Dunbrin, leaping pool after pool,
"Up and follow the leader" 's the law of the school;
A plunge at the stile with the risk of a spill,
For the best bunch of cowslips on green Cowsey's hill—
A race for the rath through the long meadow grass,
Though the boldest heart quakes at the dread "fairy pass"—
A leap for the hazel, a rustling of boughs—
Hush! it's only the gadfly that's driving the cows.
A gallop for life to the wild brake of briar,
For the fairies will kidnap the laggards who tire.
A fox breaks his cover beneath the furze-thorn,
And our hearts leap again at the sound of the horn;
A dive through the hedges—away o'er the bogs—
Ho! the whipper-in holds us as well as his dogs.
On, on to the river, he's foiled them at last;
So we halt in the furze, but the school-hour is past.
And that's how the boy took his pathway of yore
To the old whitewashed schoolhouse of Shanganamore.

The Old Whitewashed Schoolhouse in Shanganamore.

I sauntered across to the schoolhouse to-day,
Though it's twenty years now since I travelled that way;
I ploughed through the tussocks, I straddled the stile,
And halted for breath on tall Cowsey awhile.
I strolled through the meadow and into the rath,
Where the cowslips had grown o'er the old fairy path;
I shook the brown hazel, my pulse was at ease,
But the faintest of music came flying with the breeze;
I crept o'er the mossbanks, where "dead fingers" grow,
And plucked one for sake of the dead long ago;
I stole by the hedge where the blackbird and thrush
Hid their young in the heart of the hawthorn bush;
I walked the high fields where the lambs were at play
And the larks never weary of singing all day,
And passed the cross-road where the apple trees grew
That the bees loved to plunder, and school arabs, too;
And down the green laneway, and stood at the door
Of the old whitewashed schoolhouse of Shanganamore.

I lingered awhile ere I lifted the latch,
Some breath of the old inspiration to catch;
I listened—the wind shook the green beechen trees,
From within came a sound like the drone of the bees.
How often I faltered in that very place,
Half-fearful the frown of the master to face.
I looked at the chapel—the belfry was there,
And the bell that could move to delight or despair.

I peeped through the laurels and saw the flat stones
Lie like Druid cromlechs o'er our forefathers' bones.
I glanced up the roadway and thought of the fun
And the frolic of youth when the school day was done;
The games that we played, and the battles we fought,
The loves that we felt, and the things that we thought.
Through a gap in the hedge I could see far away,
Like a truant by the sallies the silver stream stray—
Ah! that stream won our hearts, and we loved it far more
Than the old whitewashed schoolhouse of Shanganamore.

Then I lifted the latch—you could hear a pin fall;
But I turned from the strangers to look at the wall—
At the lions and the tigers, the leopards, the bears
That we tracked in our dreams to their treacherous lairs;
And the maps of the lands our young fancy would roam
When the world that we knew lay 'twixt schoolhouse and home;
And the letter-chart swung from the bracket below,
With its good-natured S and its easy round O;
And the marble-frame, too, where the child wrestled then
With the problem of numbering from one unto ten;
And the Sphinx of a clock that we grudged to see go
Through the play-hour so fast, through the school day so slow,
Hung and ticked by the fire as it ticked through the tears
And the smiles that had chequered the flight of the years.

Then a swift, eager glance at the children I threw,
To see in their faces the fathers I knew,
And my heart seemed to stop as I stood on the floor
Of that old whitewashed schoolhouse of Shanganamore.

I looked up the roll for the playmates of old—
Some were lying 'neath the grass in the chapel-yard mould,
Some were tilling the fields where their childhood had flown,
And the roof that had sheltered their sires was their own;
Some had tempted the deep, and afar o'er the foam
Eat the bread of the stranger and hungered for home;
Some had followed the flag for the battlefield's joy,
And the blare of the trumpet would madden the boy;
Some scrambled to fortune, some climbed unto fame,
And pawned their heart's love to the lust of a name.
But the dead and the living came back to me there,
And the child sat again 'mongst the children that were;
And the world of enchantment that swam from my ken,
Like a lost planet, rose in its glory again.
For memory, the wizard with magical power,
Flung around me the past, and I stood at that hour
By the well-spring of life and its fountain of lore,
In the old whitewashed schoolhouse of Shanganamore.

Ah! the heart of the child is God's own living lyre,
And the "angels who see His face" need but aspire

To interpret its music; the poet cannot reach
To its mystical chords and vibrate them in speech,
Cannot throb to its wonder, its rapture, its pain,
And catch the lark-song of its spirit again.
The May blossoms wither, the June roses die,
And a glory has gone from the earth and the sky.
Pale ghost of the past, put your cold hand on mine;
We have come but as pilgrims to watch at a shrine,
And must part on the threshold, for far o'er the sea
Stern bugles of battle are calling to me.
But the soft elfland horns blow by valley and hill,
And the "blue flower of romance"[1] is blooming here still.
And oft in the Southland will blend with my dreams
The song of those wild birds, the laugh of those streams.
And some day I'll come back from that South Ocean's shore
To sleep 'neath the shamrocks of Shanganamore.

[1] "The blue flower in the fairyland of romanticism." *(Heine.)*

By the Banks of the Barrow.

By the Banks of the Barrow

I.

By the banks of the Barrow I wander
After long years in far lands again,
And I hear its low voice whisper softly
All its old love to meadow and glen.
Far away by the lonely Pacific,
It was always my hope and my dream
To return to the shade of those beeches,
By the paths of this beautiful stream.

II.

Through the valleys and glens of green Erin
Flow storied streams fairer than thee,
But I've wedded my heart to thy waters,
As Venice of old wed the sea.
And I feel in the sound of thy singing,
With a sad yet delirious joy,
All the witchery thou wert to my childhood,
And the rapture thou wert to the boy.

III.

In the light of this lovely October,
By the shade of those hallowing trees,

Thou hast wakened my soul into music,
As the forest-lyre wakes with the breeze.
And I long for the power and the passion
That to poets can only belong,
To lend to thy lyrical beauty
All the transfiguration of song.

IV.

O'er the Erne, the Lee, and the Anner
The high lights of poesy shine,[1]
But never a singer of Erin
Wed his glorified spirit with thine,
As thou glidest in sunlight and starlight,
Thy sibylline secrets to tell
To the lark in its sanctuaried meadow:
To the thrush in its cloistered dell.

V.

The playmate and friend of my childhood,
The lover of youth and its bride,—
From the world and its falseness I drifted
To dream life's young dream at thy side;
And the glories no seer ever uttered,
And the joys that no poet ever sung,—
With the prodigal heart of a lover
At my feet in those fields thou hast flung.

[1]The Erne has been sung by William Allingham; the Lee, by Callanan and a thousand singers; the Anner, by Charles Kickham.

VI.

I have travelled the wide world over
Since I last caught the light of thy smile,
And the life of its cities I've tasted
By the Yarra, the Tiber and Nile,—
But thy voice, like the voice of a mother,
Hast ever been calling to me
To return to the peace of those valleys,
And the bliss of my own Ardreigh.

VII.

The swallows are swinging above thee—
They have come back again to their nest;
And are taking their young ones to greet thee,
Ere they fly from their home in the West.
With the balsamy breezes of summer,
When the lark in the lush meadow sings,
They shall sweep with swift love to thy waters—
And I envy the swallow its wings.

VIII.

For the fate of the Gael is to travel
Through the sad-hearted cities of men,
And pine in the land of the stranger
For a glimpse of the Homeland again.
And I too, my own shining river,
Must leave thee and this dreamy dell.
O bride of my heart's love for ever,
Once again and for ever, farewell!

By the Sacramento River

By the Sacramento River,
Where the Shasta mountains rise,
Through the drifting snows we travel,
Towards the light of kindlier skies;
And we turn our eyes with longing
From the bleak and frosted pines,
To the land of golden wattle,
Where eternal summer shines.

Down the rocks the tumbling river
Through deep canyons cuts its way,
Hurrying from the lonely ranges
To its haven in the bay;
And we yearn to see the canvas
Fluttering to the southern breeze
Through the "Summer Isles of Eden"
In the blue Pacific Seas.

Hills of stately pine and cedar,
Cliffs where foaming torrents fall,
Bright with silvery manganita,
And the pale green chaperall,

Tower in sylvan grandeur round us;
But far off in dreams we stand
Where the eucalyptus sweetens
With its breath the great South Land.

Wedded with immortal summer,
Radiant 'neath its opal skies,
Wakening from the sleep of ages
With the dawn-light in its eyes.
Young Australia, we are coming
Back with all our love to thee,
Knights of thine to serve thee ever,
Empress of the Southern Sea.

Ave Roma Immortalis

Hail, Rome! that mortals The Immortal call—
We are of earth, and its dust is our doom—
The Pharaoh[1] rots beneath his desert tomb:
The lone owl hoots in the dead Cæsar's hall:
Kings die, thrones crumble, mighty empires fall.
Vainly we vaunted Titans would presume
To reach at heaven, and deathless power assume.
Our ashes and our epitaph are all.
Time leaves us of our glory—but thou, Rome,
That the clay spurns, tread'st upon our clay,
And in th' eternal city build'st thy home
Where all that men deemed deathless once had sway,
And from the summit of thy golden dome
Immortal, see'st mortality decay.

Where are your gods, ye sophists, and the kings
Ye made immortal for the awe of slaves?
Ask of the winds that desecrate their graves,
And drive their dust amidst the wreck of things

[1]The pyramids, mightiest of all monuments, were destined to be merely the tombs of their builders. The very names of these builders are forgotten. "And dust and ashes all that is," might be written on them to-day.

About their ruined world: the phœnix springs
From its own ashes, and from out the waves
Of the cerulean sea that Chios laves
Springs Aphrodite, so her poet[2] sings.
But who shall call the Cæsars back again,
Or people high Olympus? Pan is dead—
There is no Pantheon now for gods or men—
And Rome, that Porphyry scorned and Nero bled
And Julian doomed to death, lives on as then,
And o'er their dust lifts her immortal head.

Immortal Rome! there is no death for thee!
The Risen Lord made thee His earthly heir,
Bride of His love, His Kingdom too you share,
And rule man's[3] thought for ever; land and sea
Th' uncertain spoil of grappling powers may be,
But truth is thy dominion, and where'er
Men reverence truth they meet thine empire there.
Once Europe sat like Mary at your knee,
Kings owned your sway, and Senates' leant to hear
The word of truth from your unerring tongue;
Your thunders shook the tyrant's heart with fear,
And from his hand the people's charter wrung;
You watched her cradle then, and now the bier
Whereon a faithless world her corpse hath flung.

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[2]"The blind old Grecian bard." Chios, in the Ægean Sea, was one of the seven cities that claimed to be his birthplace. It was he, according to the best historians, who wrote the hymn to Aphrodite, the Venus of the Sea.

[3]"Going, therefore, teach ye all nations."

Immortal Rome! The nations come and go
And leave their mark like ooze upon the strand
The next wave washes; in the drifting sand
We write our names, amidst the ebb and flow
Of time's defacing billows, and we know
Oblivion waits our work of brain or hand,
E'en as the sea climbs up the bold headland
And flings the cliff on its resistless tide.
Fierce vandal of the world, e'en such is time,
That treads out man and all his human pride;
But on the flood of ages floats sublime
Thy soaring ark,[4] where all is wreck beside,
And 'neath its sheltering folds in every clime
The hopes of our humanity abide.

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[4] "And the ark was carried upon the waters."—*(Genesis vii., 18.)*

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